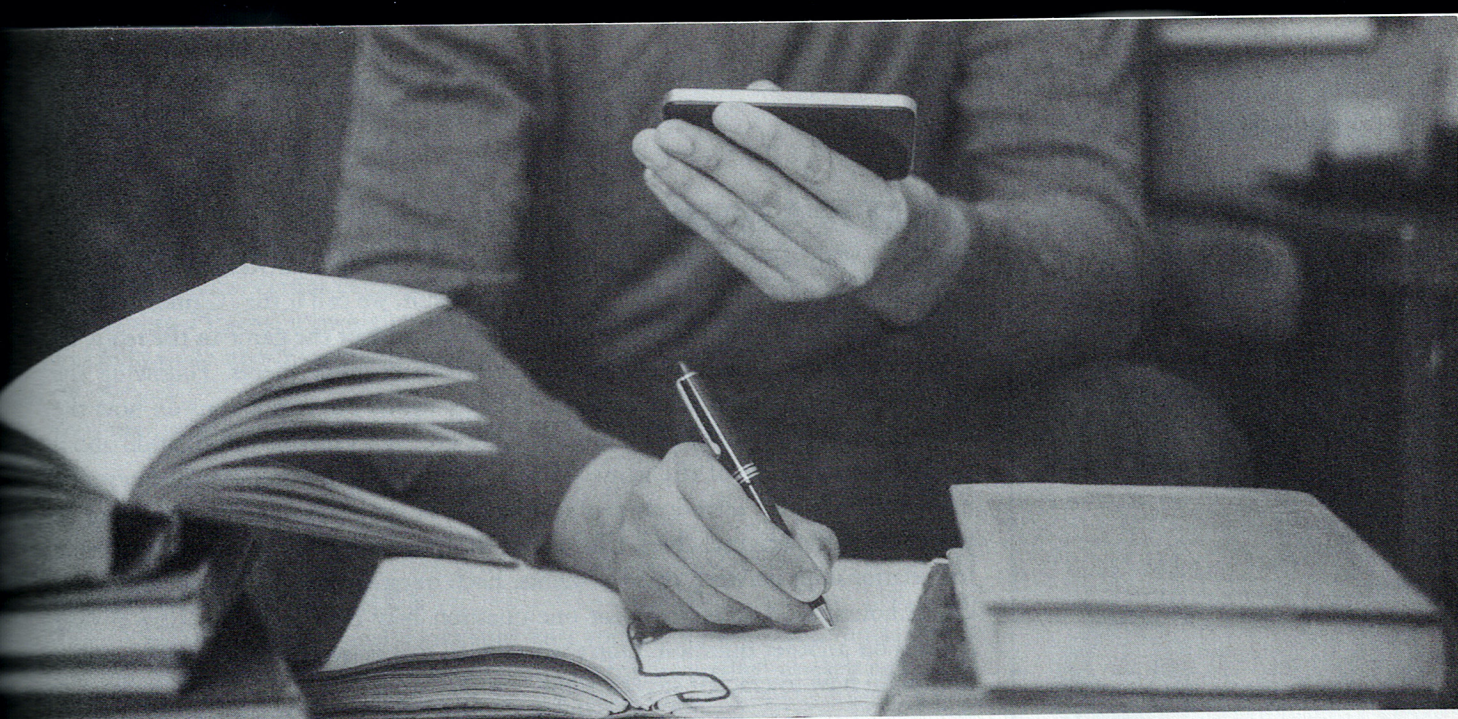




Chapter 3 Games

Of all the sections on the LSAT, Analytical Reasoning is the section that initially seems the most intimidating, but we have some good news for you: it's the section where solid technique and plenty of practice pay off the most. If you learn the techniques in this chapter and apply them consistently as you practice, you'll see that these questions follow set patterns, and that all they require is a consistent, careful approach. In fact, you may eventually come to find these questions a little bit—dare we say it?—fun. Don't worry, though; we won't tell your friends.

Games test your organization skills and your ability to efficiently extract information from incomplete data.

WHAT IS A GAME?

The folks who write the test call this section the “Analytical Reasoning” section, but really the questions are just puzzles. As a result, we call it the “Games” section. You are presented with the basic format and structure of the game in the *setup*, an initial paragraph that also provides the *elements* or game pieces. Following the setup will be a number of conditions, or *clues*, which put restrictions on how the elements can be manipulated and sometimes give you valuable information about the overall structure of the game. Finally, you will have a number of questions, each of which may introduce new restrictions or even occasionally change or replace one of the original clues. Ultimately, the questions will ask you to determine the relationships between these elements. Each question is independent of the others, although work completed for one question may help in eliminating answer choices on another question. Don’t worry if all this is overwhelming: we’re going to explain how to crack it step by step.

WHAT DOES THIS SECTION TEST?

Games test how well you can organize information, understand spatial relationships, and make deductions from those relationships when presented with limitations on the arrangements allowed by the rules. They also reward you for being able to extract this information efficiently. According to the test-writers, games are designed to predict your ability to perform the kind of detailed analyses required of law students. Obviously, this is patently ridiculous: you won’t do any of these in law schools, and you certainly won’t do any of these when you become a lawyer. What this section really tests is how well you answer the Games questions under strict time pressure.

THE SECTION ITSELF

The Games section is made up of four games. Each game includes five to seven questions. The section normally has 22 to 24 questions.

Before we begin, take a moment to read the instructions to this section.

Directions: Each set of questions in this section is based on a scenario with a set of conditions. The questions are to be answered on the basis of what can be logically inferred from the scenario and conditions. For each question, choose the response that most accurately and completely answers the question.

These are the directions that will appear on your LSAT. As usual on the LSAT, the official directions are of little help. Review them now for your peace of mind: they will not change, so don’t waste time reading them in the test room.

The good news is that with some rigorous practice diagramming games, you can radically improve your LSAT score. Many students have walked into The Princeton Review classes getting only a few Games questions right, but they walk out scoring 75 percent or higher on this section! You can do the same, as long as you follow our step-by-step process and practice, practice, practice.

Your mantra on this section is: *I will be systematic in every game I do.*

Systematic: having, showing, or involving a system, method, or plan.

GLOBAL STRATEGIES

The following is a list of general strategies that you should use when you are working the Games section. Many of these strategies can be applied to each section of the test, so make sure that you take them to heart.

Slow and Steady Wins the Race

More than any other type of question on the LSAT, Games questions require a methodical approach. Trying to rush through the section to make sure you'll finish every question will not help your score. You will achieve the highest level of accuracy by using an approach that increases efficiency—not necessarily pace—without sacrificing your ability to be accurate. If you find you can't finish a Games section in the allotted time, don't fret: very few test-takers can. Through consistent practice, you will be able to move more quickly through the section without having to work so fast that you start to make careless errors.

Strategy #1: *I will focus on accuracy and efficiency to improve my score. I will not rush through the section just to complete every question.*

Survey the Field

Every correct answer on the LSAT is worth an equal number of points. Since time is of the essence on games, spend your time on easier questions. Remember, the LSAT Games and the questions attached to them are not necessarily arranged in order of difficulty. Therefore, you should always try to estimate the difficulty of a game before you work it; if it looks difficult, move on. We'll spend time later outlining specific characteristics that make a game more or less attractive.

Strategy #2: *I will not work the games in the order presented. I will assess the difficulty of games before I begin working on them.*



Just Do Something

Keep working; keep moving forward. Don't ever just stare at a game in search of divine inspiration. The only way to deal with a difficult game is to work through it, not think through it. The bottom line is that if your cursor or pen isn't moving, then you are stalling out on a question. Put your pen to scratch paper. We'll discuss in much more detail how to efficiently use your pen on scratch paper to not only diagram each game but also test possible answer choices.

Strategy #3: *I will keep my pen moving at all times. If my pen isn't moving, I am doing something wrong.*

Choose an Answer for Every Question

Each question will appear on screen individually. When you're confident you've found the credited response, select your answer and move to the next screen. If you aren't sure of an answer, be sure to flag the question so you can return to answer it later. If you don't think you'll have time to return to the question, POE as many choices as you can and select one from the remaining choices. Flag it so you can return if you have time and move on to the next screen.

Strategy #4: *I will select an answer for every question, and flag questions that I skip for the time being.*

Control the Fear

Nerves are a common factor on a high-stakes test. Panic can easily set in on a Games section when you are faced with a difficult game. It can even creep in when you are halfway through a game. One of the biggest benefits you will get from this book is a thorough knowledge of the Games section. You will have a strategy for each game you face. If you find yourself panicking, take a short break. Put your pen down, close your eyes, and take three slow breaths. As you do, repeat to yourself that you know what you are doing and that you have prepared for this section. Open your eyes, refocus on the game at hand, and dive back in. Think about similar games in this book. You've got this!

Strategy #5: *I will control my panic by focusing on the game in front of me.*

GAMES: SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

The LSAT states that for the Games section “it may be useful to draw a rough diagram” when working the section. That’s like saying it may be useful to peel a banana before eating it. It is possible to eat a banana without peeling it, but it’s much more enjoyable to peel it first.

Make It Visual

Games are a visual exercise. Games test your ability to determine how various elements can be arranged in space. Therefore, words don’t help you; images do. Your goal will be to translate all the words that you are given in the *setup* and the *clues*, and sometimes in the questions themselves, into visual symbols and draw them on your scratch paper. Once you’ve done this, you won’t need to (or want to) refer to that confusing verbal mess again.

The LSAT writers are banking on the fact that most test-takers will try to organize all this information in their heads in their rush to finish. That’s a recipe for disaster. Accuracy is crucial on this section, and the only way to ensure accuracy is to work with the information on the page by translating it and drawing it out.

Be Consistent

There are many ways you can symbolize and diagram the information that is presented to you in a game. We’re going to show you what we’ve found to be the best and most efficient way to diagram and symbolize. If something we show you doesn’t work well, design your own system. Whatever method you choose, be consistent with your symbols and your diagram. When the pressure is on, you don’t want to misinterpret a symbol you’ve drawn.

Be Careful

We’ve already stressed the importance of accuracy over speed, but the point is worth making again. You should be confident and aggressive on games, but there is a fine line between aggressiveness and carelessness; don’t put yourself on the wrong side of it. This is the only section of the LSAT in which you can be sure an answer is right. Do the work required to take advantage of that.



You have plenty of scratch paper so use an entire sheet of paper for each game.

Keep your pen
moving!

Be Flexible

The four games that you will see on test day will look slightly different from the games that you will have practiced in this book. However, all these games were written by the *same* test-writers for the *same* test using the *same* basic guidelines. Once you understand how these games work and can recognize the basic structures the test-writers use to build them, you can see how repetitive the patterns really are. Just stay calm and take a step back to evaluate the information. The details will change, but the basic ingredients won't. Focus on the big picture. Find the similarities to the games that you've already worked.

Games Technique: Practicing on your Own Below you will find a bullet point list of the most effective ways to practice the games section on your own. Game specific strategies will be found in each lesson.

- Do everything in pen, and don't erase your work.
- Work and write small—all of your work must fit on your scratch paper.
- If a particular clue symbolization (discussed later) isn't working, or is even causing mistakes, stop using it. Try something else.
- Do games over and over. If you had trouble with one, go back to it later, and try it again until you get it.
- Practice games only when you are able to give them your full attention.
- Very important: rework all the games you do (including the games in this chapter) at least once.
- Always keep in mind which types of games you're able to do most quickly. Look for those games and do them first on the real LSAT.

APPROACHING THE LSAT GAMES SECTION

This chapter is arranged into a series of five lessons. The lessons will introduce you step by step to concepts that you need to master in order to be successful on the Games section. These concepts are scaffolded, which means that later lessons build upon the strategies and techniques taught in earlier lessons. The games types also get progressively more complex. We strongly recommend that you work the lessons in the order given.

Don't just read the text! Take notes on the various strategies and steps provided. Make sure you have a good understanding of why we are showing you various techniques. Finally, the games in each lesson were chosen specifically to highlight the key teaching points in the lesson. Make sure that you take the time at the end of each lesson to fill out the self-evaluation. Work to mentally link the discussion in the lesson to the example game at the end of each lesson. On the next page, you will find the first lesson. Good luck to you and study hard!

LESSON 1: A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH

Just as we did in the Arguments section, we have boiled down the Games section into a step-by-step process. You will follow this systematic approach for every game that you work. Learn these steps, practice them religiously, apply them consistently, and you'll improve your score. In this first lesson, we will walk you step by step through your first game. The game will be mixed with the teaching test. At the end of the lesson, we will publish the game as it would appear on the LSAT. You should try your hand at it a second time without our prompts. Sound good? Then let's dive in!

Step 1: Diagram and Inventory Your first step will be to determine the appropriate diagram for the game by evaluating both the setup and the clues. You will be given enough information to understand the basic structure of the game. Your diagram is described by the setup and will become the fixed game board onto which you will place the *elements*—your game pieces. You should make an inventory of the elements next to the diagram, so that you'll have everything in one place and will be able to keep track of it easily. Don't rush through this step, because this is the heart of your process. People often want to start scribbling a diagram as soon as something pops out at them from the setup. Take the time to evaluate the setup thoroughly, and you'll be well equipped for the rest of the process.

Step 2: Symbolize the clues and double-check After you've drawn your diagram, transform the clues into visual symbols. Your symbolizations should be consistent with the diagram and with each other. The goal is to change the clues into visual references that will fit into your diagram. Remember the three Cs of symbolization: keep your symbols *clear*, *consistent*, and *concise*.

Never forget that correctly symbolizing every clue is the key to improving accuracy and efficiency. The most valuable 30 seconds you can spend on any game is double-checking your symbols to make sure that they perfectly match all the information in the clue. Do not merely reread each clue and glance at your symbol again. If you misread the clue once, you might do it again. Instead, work against the grain when you double-check. Number each of your symbolizations. Then articulate in your own words what each symbol means and carry that back up to the clues you were given. When you find a match, check off that clue. Finally, be sure to go back over the information presented in the setup as well because some games may include restrictions or extra rules that should be treated like clues. Once you're sure everything is all accounted for, you're ready to move on.

Step 3: Make deductions and size up the game Now that you're sure you've got everything properly symbolized, it's time to make any *deductions* that you can from the information that was given by the clues. Look for overlap between the clues and the diagram and among the clues that share the same elements. See if there is anything else that you know for sure. Making deductions is not merely suspecting that something may be true; a deduction is something that you know for a fact. It is something that must always be true or must always be false. Add your deductions to the information you already have. You'll notice



Remember!

The elements are the mobile pieces in a game; don't forget to list them in an inventory near your diagram.

Hint:

Repeated elements often provide the opportunity for deductions. If an element is listed in two or more clues, try to combine information to arrive at a new fact.

that many deductions give you concrete limitations about where elements are restricted—where they can't go—rather than where they must go. Consider each clue individually to see what it says about the placement of elements. Then look for overlap between different clues. Do several clues mention the same element? If so, how do they interact? Do you have any clues that restrict movement? How does that affect the placement of other elements?

While you're looking for these deductions, you'll find that you're also learning how the game is going to work. Keep your eyes open for anything that seems as if it will have a particularly large impact on the outcome of the game. The most restricted places and the most restrictive clues tend to have the greatest impact when you start working the questions. The more you know about how the game will work, the more efficient you'll be at working through the questions.

Step 4: Assess the questions Not all games questions are on the same level of difficulty. As a result, you should move through the questions from easiest to most challenging. We will show you how to identify these questions in detail as we move through this chapter. For now, familiarize yourself with the terminology and basic indicators for each question type.

First, look for what we call Grab-a-Rule questions. Grab-a-Rule questions do not appear on every game, but they are common. They have historically been the first question of a game. These are questions that give you full arrangements of the elements in every answer, and ask you which one doesn't break any rules. Remember, if the question does not deal with every element and every space on your diagram, it is not a true Grab-a-Rule.

Next, look for Specific questions. These questions will further limit the initial conditions of the game and provide you with more information. They will usually start with the word "if." Specific questions tend to be fairly quick since the question itself constrains some of the vagueness of the game. Once you've done all the Specific questions, you'll have a diagram with several valid permutations—or "plays"—of the game.

The third style of question you should work is the General questions. These questions are typically open-ended and ask what could happen without placing specific restrictions. These questions usually begin with the word "which." By saving these for later, you can often use your prior work from the Specific questions to eliminate bad answer choices.

The final question type that you may see is Complex questions. Complex questions can change the original game by adding, changing, or deleting a rule. They can also ask which answer choice could be substituted for a rule without changing the game. No matter what form they take, complex questions should be saved for last since they function differently from the rest of the questions. These questions can also be very time-consuming for little gain. Never forget that the complex question is worth the same number of points as the Grab-a-Rule. It is always worth considering how much you need to get that one question correct. For most test-takers, the best strategy on these questions is to choose your letter of the day

and move on to the next game. Remember that you can always come back and work a Complex question if you have time.

There is one last thing to know about the questions. No matter what the question type, the question stem will affect how the credited response is reached. The four question stems are must be true, could be true, could be false, and must be false. The LSAT has a wide variety of phrasing, but every question will ultimately use one of these four stems. Make a habit now of underlining each question stem. This will help you to determine the best approach to the question and the type of answer you'll need.

Step 5: Act Each question task requires its own strategy. Using the proper strategy leads to saving time on a given question without sacrificing accuracy. Plus, by approaching the questions in an efficient order, you'll find that the work you've done on earlier questions will often help you to find the right answer on a later question.

Step 6: Answer using Process of Elimination Different question stems require POE to different degrees. Sometimes you'll be able to go straight to the right answer from your deductions, but often you'll need to work questions by finding the four wrong answers. As a last resort, you may need to test answer choices one at a time to find the right one.

READY FOR YOUR FIRST GAME?

Now let's see how the six steps work on a real game. Since this is your first game, let's walk through it together. Focus on how each of the steps is applied and how the game should look step by step. Give yourself as much time as you need to learn the method by the following game (feel free to write out the six steps and have them next to you). Pay no attention to timing on this first game—that will come later. This is the foundation you will rely upon for all future games. The full game is reproduced on page 154 for you to try it again on your own. After this first game, all other games in this book will be provided to you to work first, and we will show you how to crack them later. Let's begin.



Game 1 and its questions
are from PrepTest 45,
Section 3, Questions 1–6.

Cracking Game 1

Step 1: Diagram and inventory Take a moment to read the setup of the first game. Games can be broken into two rough categories: Ordering and Grouping. Ordering games consist of putting elements in some sort of order, while grouping games put the elements into arbitrary groups. Your first question should always be to ask yourself which type of game you are facing. Which one is this one?

On one afternoon, Patterson meets individually with each of exactly five clients—Reilly, Sanchez, Tang, Upton, and Yansky—and also goes to the gym by herself for a workout. Patterson's workout and her five meetings each start at either 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, 5:00, or 6:00. The following conditions must apply:

What we have here are five meetings and a workout and six time slots in the day. There is a natural order to the time slots, so this is an Ordering game. Use a table in this situation to diagram the game and organize the information. Since you want the thing that doesn't change across the top of your diagram, always make the order the core of your diagram. We will be assigning the different appointments to different time slots. In order to keep track of the various elements, list them off to the side of your diagram.

Also, we have what is called a *one-to-one correspondence* in this game—there are six times (*core*) and five appointments and a workout (*six elements*). The setup specifically tells us that Patterson will meet with each one of these people once, so we have to use all of the elements. One-to-one correspondence isn't just a matter of the number of each, but also whether all are used and not reused. This is a great thing because it will limit the number of possible places to which the elements can be assigned. This answers two questions you'll want to ask at this step for every game you work: (1) "Can I leave out any elements?" and (2) "Can there be any repeats?" If the answer to either of these questions is yes, then the game is more complicated. Since this is an Ordering game with a 1:1 correspondence, this is among the most straightforward games you will see on the LSAT. This is the type of game you would want to work first on the test.

Take a look at our diagram for this game.

Tip!

Make sure your diagram is large enough to be useable but small enough that you won't have to redraw the game.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00

Step 2: Symbolize the clues and double-check Now that we've drawn a diagram, it's important that we symbolize the clues so that they fit into our diagram. We want to get rid of the words from the clue and transform each into a visual puzzle piece that fits neatly into the diagram we've drawn. As you symbolize, remember the three Cs: *clear*, *consistent*, and *concise*. Also, make sure to number the clues as you work. Take a look at clue number 1 for this game.

Patterson meets with Sanchez at some time before her workout.

Take a moment to think about the logic of this clue. Her meeting with Sanchez occurs at some point in the day before her workout. It could be immediately before the workout, or Sanchez could be at the beginning of her schedule and the workout at the end. The only event that cannot occur is having her workout before her meeting with Sanchez. This is what we call a range clue. Your symbol needs to show both the order of events and the fact that they can be spread apart. Ellipses are a natural way to show this. Take a look at our symbol below.

(1) S...W

Let's look at clue number 2.

Patterson meets with Tang at some time after her workout.

(2) W...T

Hopefully you already noticed the similarity from clue number 1. This is another range clue. One other important thing to note is that the workout is mentioned by both clues. For now, merely make a mental note of that information and move on to clue number 3.

Patterson meets with Yansky either immediately before or immediately after her workout.

There is a very important keyword in this clue that changes it dramatically from the previous two. Think about what the word "immediately" does to the logic of this clue. Unlike the previous ranges, this clue forces Yansky and the workout to always occur together. To symbolize this clue, put the two letters next to each other and put a box around them indicating a fixed block of text. Finally, note that the clue establishes an either/or situation. Be sure to symbolize the clue going in both directions. Interestingly, W is mentioned again.

(3)

W	Y
---	---

Draw exact symbols for the information given to you. Remember the three C's for symbols: *clear*, *consistent*, and *concise*.

The great thing about this piece of information is that it will occupy two of the six possible spaces. Blocks are restrictive clues that limit the possible arrangements and will make your job of answering the questions easier. Look for them when you are reading over the clues and deciding whether to do a particular game. Finally, look at the last clue.

Patterson meets with Upton at some time before she meets with Reilly.

(4) U...R

Ideally, you had this one symbolized before you saw our example. Now it is time for the most important stage of the clue symbolization process. Double-check your symbols. Remember to not merely read each of the clues again. Instead, work backward. Force yourself to put the symbols into your own words. Here's an example of the process:

Clue 4: You say "R comes later than U." Check the clue. It matches so you move on.

Clue 3: You say "W and Y are next to each other in either order." Check the clue. It matches, so check it off and move on.

Clue 2: You say "T comes later than W." Note how this is the same phrasing from Clue 4. Check it off.

Clue 1: You say "W comes later than S." Check it off.

We can't emphasize enough how important this step is. A mistake at this stage can be extremely costly. If you have a bad symbolization, the best case scenario is that you invest several minutes but are unable to answer any questions. The worst case scenario is that you get down to a single answer on every question, but that answer is wrong. Whenever you are working a game and cannot get down to a single answer, you should always ask yourself first, "Did I take the time to double-check?" If the answer is no, we can guarantee that you missed a clue.

Step 3: Make deductions and size up the game By now you should have a list of clues that looks like this:

1. S...W

2. W...T

3.

W	Y
---	---

4. U...R

Now let's take a look at the clues we've drawn to see what kinds of deductions we might make. First, make a *clue shelf* on your diagram. This should be the first row of your diagram. You will put any clues information and all deductions here. This row is vital to a strong diagram. Once you get these deductions down, make sure to draw a line under it and never write on this line again.

Approach the clues in a systematic manner. Start with what we call "single-clue deductions." Look at clue 1 and ask what must be true or must be false based on this information. Range clues lend themselves to a quick deduction. Since Patterson meets with Sanchez before the workout, you can deduce that Patterson's workout cannot be at 1:00. If it was, then it would be impossible for Patterson to meet with Sanchez. Likewise, the meeting with Sanchez cannot be at 6:00. Look at the diagram below to see how we indicated this.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	~W					~S

Take a moment to consider the other two range clues from your clue list. We want to challenge you to try to make the same deduction yourself. Have you done it? Your diagram should now look like this.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	~W ~T ~R					~S ~W ~U

If this feels shockingly easy to you, don't be embarrassed. As we said at the beginning of this chapter, you can actually find yourself enjoying games once you unlock their secrets.

Now consider clue 3 individually. Is there anything that must be true or false that you can figure out here? The answer is no. Since W and Y can alternate order, we have no way to know from this clue alone where W and Y will be in our diagram. Not every clue will provide you with a deduction. However, it is vital that you establish the habit now of looking at each clue on its own. Being systematic will build your efficiency by helping you not waste time and will improve your accuracy by ensuring that you don't miss a vital deduction.

Once you have considered each clue separately, it is time to look for what we call "multiple-clue deductions." These are found by looking at the interactions of various clues. One of the fastest ways to find multiple-clue deductions is by seeing if different clues share the same elements. Remember earlier when we noted that W seemed to appear often? Let's see how the different clues can combine into a more powerful deduction. First, stack clue one and two together.

S...W
W...T

They can be chained together to make a longer range.

S...W...T

Now combine this deduction with clue three. W and Y are a block element that must always be together so now you have

S...

W	Y
---	---

 ...T

This deduction comprises four of the six elements. The location of any one of the elements in this deduction will drive the rest of the game by quickly restricting locations of elements. At this point, you have made the most crucial deductions and could proceed into the game. However, you should note that deductions can build upon one another. As a result, you can actually take this new information even further. Think back to the very first deduction we made. Clue 1 means that W cannot be first, which is already noted on the diagram. Now look at the newest deduction above, and apply the same logic to it. What other element cannot be first? Is there anything that cannot be second? What about third, fourth, fifth, or sixth? If you made all the possible deductions, your diagram should now look like this.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	~W ~T ~R ~Y	~T	~T	~S	~S	~S ~W ~U ~Y

Finally, note the large number of elements that cannot be scheduled at 1:00 or at 6:00. In rare cases, such as this one, you can transform these deductions from what cannot be there to what can. Since R, T, W, and Y cannot be first, then only S or U can be first. Likewise, since S, U, W, and Y cannot be last, only R or T can be placed there. Here is the final diagram with all deductions.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	W T R Y S/U	T	T	S	S	S W U Y R/T

At this point, we've come up with all the deductions we can and have a pretty good sense of the way this game is going to work. Things will hinge on the placement of elements in the long-range deduction. All the information that we've put in the diagram so far will be true for the whole game, so we'll draw a line under it to separate it off and remind ourselves to pay attention to those limitations as we work each new question. This row of restrictions that apply to the whole game is our final clue shelf.

Steps 4 and 5: Assess the question and Act As we said earlier, there are basically four types of questions that you will encounter on games—Grab-a-Rule, Specific, General, and Complex.

Grab-a-Rule questions are technically a type of General question, but these should be tackled first because they are quick questions that will help you comprehend the game itself. But be careful—not all games have Grab-a-Rule questions. If you don't see this type of straightforward question, fear not. Alternatively, if you dive into a question and realize halfway through that it is not a Grab-a-Rule, fear not! Regardless, just keep moving and look for the next type of question on the list—Specific questions.

Tip!

Be very careful to not work any questions on your clue shelf. These marks that must be true should not be confused with any information that merely could be true.

Grab-a-Rule questions deal with all the clues and the entire diagram. They have historically been the first question on a game when present and often ask you to find an “acceptable order” or a “complete and accurate list.” Take a moment now to turn to the full game on page 154. Does this game have a Grab-a-Rule?

Seriously, flip to page 154 and take a look. We’ll wait.

Welcome back! Specific questions are the kind you should search out and do after the Grab-a-Rule. You’ll be able to identify them because they often start with the word “if” and ask you to find the answer choice that *must be true*, *must be false*, *could be true*, or *could be false* in a specific situation. These questions give you an extra piece of information that will further limit the possibilities on your diagram. The more concrete the information given by a Specific question, the easier the question is. Again turn to page 154 and find the Specific questions. Which one has the more concrete information?

Once you have completely worked the Specific questions, it’s time to tackle the General questions. These usually begin with the word “which” and differ from Specific questions in that they don’t give you any extra limiting information. That’s why we don’t answer them first. If you save these until after you’ve done the Specific questions, however, you’ll find that you will be able to eliminate many answer choices simply by referring back to the work that you’ve already done on the other questions. How’s that for efficiency?

Turn to page 154 and look at each of the General questions. Pay attention to the variability of each one. Do you already have the answer to any of them?

Finally, there are the aptly named Complex questions. Sometimes these will ask what new rule, if substituted for one of the existing clues, would have the same effect. Other times they might start with either “if” or “which” but will have a complicated task like figuring out which of the answer choices, if it were true, would completely determine the outcome of the game. These questions are often among the most difficult and most labor intensive. You’ll see later why you should do them last, if that’s not clear already. For now, relax: there are no complex questions on your first game.

Step 6: Answer using Process of Elimination You won’t always have to work with the answer choices one at a time. The beauty of a systematic approach is that you can often deduce the answer and go straight to it. This is the most efficient approach.

But when you can’t do that, POE is the way to go. You’ll have to use different methods in different situations, but the point is that it’s often faster to find four wrong answers than it is to find the right answer.

Let's apply the approach to the questions in order. Start with the Grab-a-Rule.

1. Which one of the following could be an acceptable schedule of Patterson's workout and meetings, in order from 1:00 to 6:00?

- (A) Yansky, workout, Upton, Reilly, Sanchez, Tang 
- (B) Upton, Tang, Sanchez, Yansky, workout, Reilly 
- (C) Upton, Reilly, Sanchez, workout, Tang, Yansky 
- (D) Sanchez, Yansky, workout, Reilly, Tang, Upton 
- (E) Sanchez, Upton, workout, Yansky, Tang, Reilly 

Here's How to Crack It

We call this type a Grab-a-Rule question because all you have to do is apply each rule—or clue—to the answer choices and eliminate any choice that violates it. It gives you five complete lists and asks you to pick the one that follows the rules. These tend to be straightforward, quick questions that will give you valuable insight into how a game works (if you missed anything during the deductions step). Usually one rule will eliminate one answer choice. While it is possible that a single rule can eliminate multiple answers, it is rare.

Our first clue tells us that W is after S; that eliminates (A), since it has W before S.

Our second clue tells us that T is after W; that eliminates (B), since it has T before W.

Our third clue tells us that W and Y must be immediately next to one another; that eliminates (C), since it has W and Y separated by T.

Our fourth clue tells us that R is after U; that eliminates (D), since it has R before U.

Choice (E) is the only one left; it must be the answer.

Note: Your process here is to take the clues and apply them to the choices, not the other way around. Taking each choice and applying it to each of the clues is very cumbersome and could lead to careless errors. Trust us.

Now, let's tackle the Specific questions.

5. If Patterson meets with Tang at 4:00, then which one of the following must be true?

- (A) Patterson meets with Reilly at 5:00. 
- (B) Patterson meets with Upton at 5:00. 
- (C) Patterson meets with Yansky at 2:00. 
- (D) Patterson meets with Yansky at 3:00. 
- (E) Patterson's workout is at 2:00. 

Here's How to Crack It

Of the two specific questions, you should work this one first since it provides very concrete information about when Tang's meeting is. First, underline the question stem. This question is asking what *must be true*. For every single specific question, you should create a new row on the diagram, and start with the new information from the question on the diagram. Next, determine what other restrictions will allow you to fill in more information by looking for any overlap with your clues. Continue to work on your diagram until you can't fill in any more information. If you find yourself in a situation where slots have been limited to only two options, it's worth filling them in. If there are more than two options, don't bother writing them down, or it will get messy fast.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	W T R Y S/U	T	T	S	S	S W U Y R/T
⑤	S	W/Y	W/Y	T	U	R

Putting T at 4:00 leaves only three time slots earlier than T. Based on our deductions, these must be filled with S...W/Y...Y/W. Since the order of W and Y cannot be determined, write both elements into each of slots 2:00 and 3:00. Fill that into the diagram. Our only remaining elements are U and R, which must be in that order, so fill those into the diagram. As you can see from the diagram, the locations of S, U, and R are fixed by T being at 4:00. W and Y can alternate. Since

we are looking for what must be true, the credited response will deal with one of the fixed elements. Now, let's head to the answer choices and see if we can find an answer. We can—the answer is (B).

On to the next Specific question.

4. If Patterson meets with Sanchez the hour before she meets with Yansky, then each of the following could be true EXCEPT:

- (A) Patterson meets with Reilly at 2:00. 
- (B) Patterson meets with Yansky at 3:00. 
- (C) Patterson meets with Tang at 4:00. 
- (D) Patterson meets with Yansky at 5:00. 
- (E) Patterson meets with Tang at 6:00. 

Here's How to Crack It

Wait! If you ever try something in a game that doesn't work, just draw a line through incorrect information and create a new row. Even bad plays add to your knowledge of how the game works. Specific questions will help you with POE when you get to the General questions. Start another row of information and make sure to write the question number next to it just in case you have to come back to it.

This question is more challenging for several reasons. First, it provides relational information rather than concrete information. S is immediately before Y, but we don't know where in the diagram this goes. Second, the question stem is *could be true EXCEPT*. With EXCEPT/LEAST/NOT question stems, it is helpful to write down what you will POE and what you are looking for. We want to eliminate any answer that could be true, so we are looking to choose the one choice that must be false.

The best way to beat this problem is to apply one of your global strategies: "Keep your pen moving."

According to the question, S is before Y and since S is before Y, W must come immediately after Y according to clue 3. Add this new information to your diagram, and then add to it any information you know.

Since we deduced that S or U must be first, begin by placing the SYW block in slots 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Now put T, U, and R in valid positions. Then check the answer choices.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	W T R Y S/U	T	T	S	S	S W T Y R/T
⑤	S	W/Y	W/Y	T	U	R
④	S	Y	W	T	U	R

Remember, if we have shown an answer choice could be true, then we need to eliminate that answer choice. Choice (C) matches our diagram, so eliminate it. Don't fret that we got rid of only one answer choice. Keep that pen moving! Try shifting SYW over to slots 2, 3, and 4.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	W T R Y S/U	T	T	S	S	S W T Y R/T
⑤	S	W/Y	W/Y	T	U	R
④	S U	Y S	W Y	T W	U R/T	R R/T

Note that this play leaves only two time slots available at the end of the day. We know from our deductions that either S or U is first. Since S is second, put U first. This leaves T and R, which can alternate positions. Now, go back to the answer choices. Our diagram matches both (B) and (E), so eliminate these. Repeat the process one last time by moving the SYW block over one more starting at 3. If SWY is placed in 3, 4, and 5, then T must be in 6 and U must be in 1, forcing R to be in 2.

RSTUYW	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00
Clue Shelf	W F R Y S/U	F	F	S	S	S W H Y R/T
(5)	S	W/Y	W/Y	T	U	R
(4)	S U U	Y S R	W Y S	T W Y	U R/T W	R R/T T

This play matches (A), which can now be eliminated. The only remaining answer is (D).

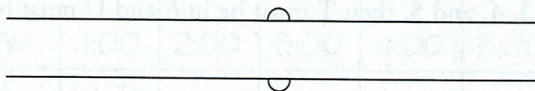
At this point, you may be feeling frustrated. You are probably thinking that you just did a lot of work for one question. However, don't lose sight of the end game. Each of these different plays provided you with valuable information about the game that will help you on the General questions. Speaking of which, let's move on.

2. How many of the clients are there, any one of whom could meet with Patterson at 1:00?

- (A) one 
- (B) two 
- (C) three 
- (D) four 
- (E) five 

Here's How to Crack It

This question hopefully demonstrates to you the necessity of making deductions. From our deductions, we know that only two people can be first. This is further supported by our valid plays from questions 4 and 5. Choose (B) and move on.



3. Patterson CANNOT meet with Upton at which one of the following times?

- | | | |
|-----|------|--|
| (A) | 1:00 | |
| (B) | 2:00 | |
| (C) | 3:00 | |
| (D) | 4:00 | |
| (E) | 5:00 | |

Here's How to Crack It

Just like the previous question, this question asks for a deduction you could have made. Specifically, this question asks you to identify a time that U cannot be scheduled. For questions like this, always refer to your diagram, checking deductions and previous work from Specific questions and comparing them to the answers. We know that U cannot meet at 6:00; however, this is not an answer choice! Since the question is asking for when U cannot be scheduled, we can eliminate any answer that lists a valid time slot for U. Look at your prior work from the specific questions. We know from the work we did on question 5 that U can meet Patterson at 5:00, so eliminate (E). From the work from question 4, U can meet with Patterson at 1:00, so eliminate (A).

Once you've exhausted your prior work, you have no choice but to test each of the remaining answers. When you test answer choices, make sure that you have a clear idea of what you are going to eliminate. In this question, we can eliminate any time slot that is valid for U to use. It is an arbitrary choice, so let's just start with (B). Try to make this answer true.

Putting U at 2:00 forces S to be at 1:00. Now, make sure the rest of the elements can be placed. Work until either you are finished or are sure that there is no way to continue. The diagram for 3B shows one example of a valid play. Your play may look different. The trick is to play out the game and glance at your symbols as you do so to see if you have violated any of the clues.